

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3, 6-11, and 13 are pending in the present application, Claims 1-3 and 6-11 having been amended, Claims 4, 5, and 12 having been canceled, Claim 13 having been added. Support for the amendments to Claims 1-3 and 6-11 is self-evident from the originally filed application. Support for new Claim 13 is found, for example, in original Claim 12. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, the title of the application was objected to; Claims 1-3, 6, 7, 10, and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Watanabe (U.S. Patent No. 5,589,954); Claims 4, 5, and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Watanabe in view of Aoyagi (U.S. Patent No. 5,982,999); Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Watanabe in view of Tabata et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,993,181, hereinafter Tabata); and Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Watanabe in view of Bhattachariya et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,546,132, hereinafter Bhattachariya).

Applicants thank the Examiners for the courtesy of an interview extended to Applicants' representative on April 17, 2007. During the interview, differences between the present invention and the applied art, and the rejections noted in the outstanding Office Action were discussed. No agreement was reached pending the Examiner's further review when a response is filed.

With respect to the objection to the title, a new title is provided. Applicants respectfully request that the objection to the title be withdrawn.

With respect to the rejection of Claim 1 as anticipated by Watanabe, Applicants respectfully submit that the amendment to Claim 1 overcomes this ground of rejection.

An object of the claimed invention is, in a non-limiting embodiment such as a copier which has a scanner and a data-transmitting unit, to effect suitable correction processing and transformation processing on scanned images of character images, picture images, and so on for transmitting to a receiving end. The receiving end can receive the transmitted images without a degradation in image quality. Data is effectively distributed and the use of data-transmitting is optimized.

Amended Claim 1 is directed toward

An image processing apparatus, comprising:  
a determining unit configured to determine image characteristics of areas in an image data corresponding to an image, and to generate area data corresponding to each of the areas;

a memory configured to store the image data and the area data in a correlated manner;

an image processing unit including a gamma correction unit, a color correction unit, and a gradation processing unit, wherein

said gamma correction unit is configured to effect a gamma correction on specific image data stored in the memory based on processing conditions set for the area data correlated with the specific image data,

said color correction unit is configured to convert the specific image data from CMYK image data to RGB image data based on a setting of parameters, the parameters being based on the area data correlated with the specific image, and

said image gradation processing unit is configured to effect a gradation processing on the specific image data based on the area data correlated with the specific image data;

an image format conversion unit configured to convert a file format of the RGB image data processed by the image processing unit into a general-purpose image file format; and

a transmission unit configured to send the image data in the general-purpose image file format to an external device.

Watanabe describes generating a gamma correction curve based on a result of an area separating unit so as to effect optimum gamma correction.

Aoyagi describes effecting color correction and graduation correction based on a result of area separating.

Tabata describes setting each signal of R, G, and B to a same value of "0" in a black character area.

Bhattacharja describes setting each signal of R, G, and B to a same value of "255" in a white background area.


Amended Claim 1 recites "said color correction unit is configured to convert the specific image data from CMYK image data to RGB image data based on a setting of parameters, the parameters being based on the area data correlated with the specific image," and "an image format conversion unit configured to convert a file format of the RGB image data processed by the image processing unit into a general-purpose image file format." The above-noted cited references, taken alone or in proper combination, do not disclose or suggest both of these distinct elements.

In view of the above-noted distinctions, Applicants respectfully submit that amended Claim 1 (and any claims dependent thereon) patentably distinguishes over Watanabe, Aoyagi, Bhattacharjya, and Tabata, taken alone or in proper combination. Claims 7 and 14 recite elements similar to those of amended Claim 1. Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 7 and 13 (and any claims dependent thereon) patentably distinguish over Watanabe, Aoyagi, Bhattacharjya, and Tabata, taken alone or in proper combination, for at least the reasons stated for Claim 1.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment,  
the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance and an early and favorable  
action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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